

Public Opinion on the Bring Your Own Device Concept for the 2020 Census

Casey Eggleston, Jennifer Hunter Childs,
and Aleia Clark Fobia
U.S. Census Bureau

**Disclaimer: This presentation is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. Any views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.*

Background

- Census Bureau will need to hire approximately 500,000 enumerators for the 2020 Census
- With mobile data collection for Non-Response Follow Up becoming the norm, cost savings to BYOD could be substantial (currently estimated at \$200 million)
- BYOD could also simplify data collection logistics and enumerator training

Objectives

1. Assess public attitudes about enumerators using personal devices for data collection (Bring Your Own Device - BYOD)
2. Explore potential attitudinal and demographic predictors of favorability toward BYOD
3. Identify possible concerns about BYOD

Data Sources

- 2014 Census Test Focus Groups
 - September, 2014; October, 2014
 - 12 participants; 8 participants
 - Held in Washington, DC Metro area
- 2015 Gallup Survey
 - January 13, 2015 – February 8, 2015 (collection ongoing)
 - Response Rate (AAPOR RR3) \approx 11%
 - 3,323 Respondents
 - 2,006 asked first key BYOD question (due to programming error, only individuals in the labor force were asked)

Methodology - Focus Groups

- 2014 Census Test- April 1 Census Day
- 7 focus groups in DC Metro area
- August 2014 – October 2014
- 3 rounds of groups by response type
 1. Self-Responders: responded by July 27
 2. Non-responders: did not respond by July 27
 3. **Non-Response Follow Up (NRFU) Responders: responded with an enumerator**

Methodology – Gallup Survey

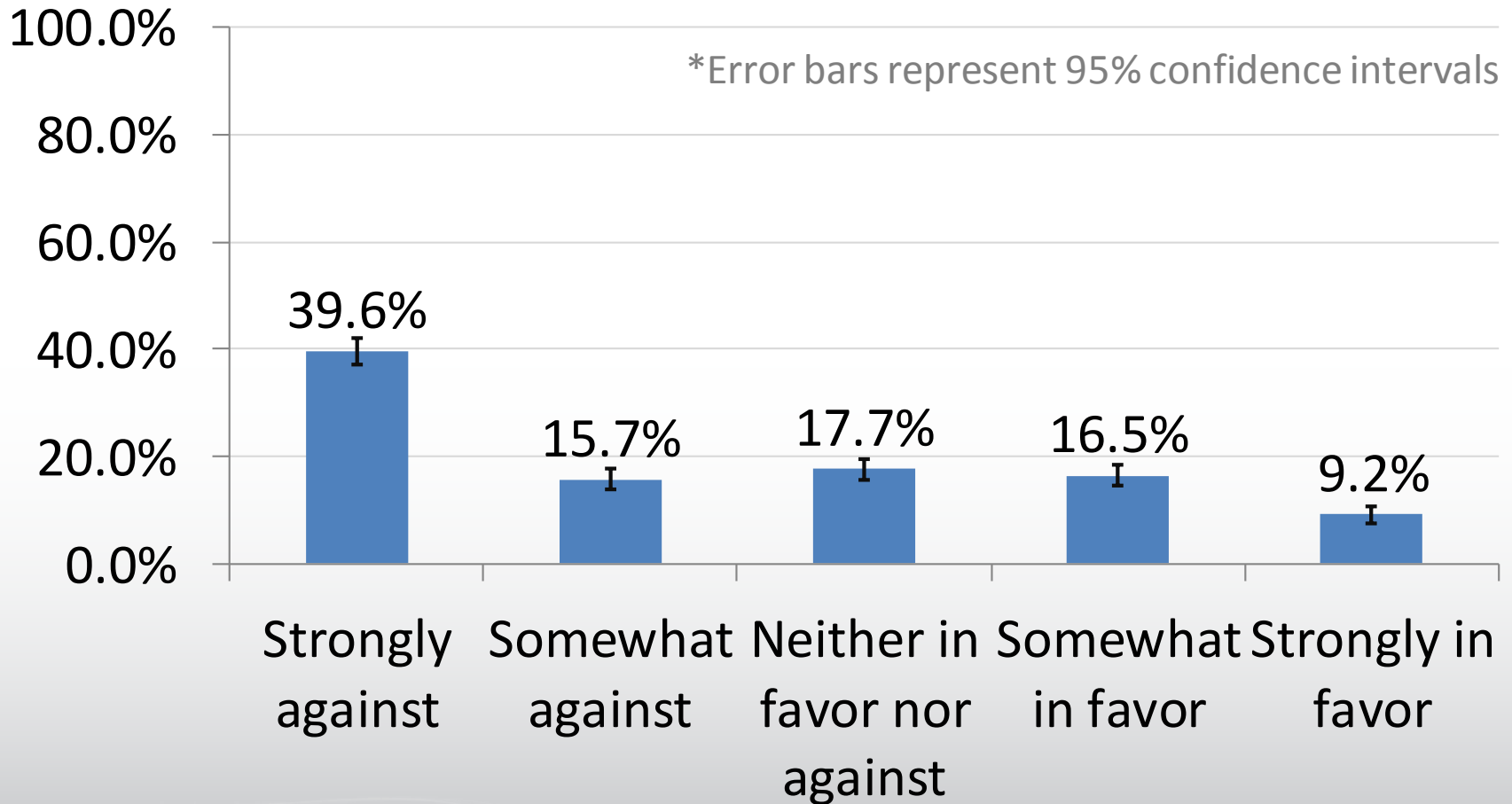
- Gallup Nightly Survey
 - 121 responses daily
 - Subsample of National RDD Sample
 - Landline and Cellphone
- BYOD questions added to ongoing data collection January 13, 2015
 - Collection will continue until responses have been obtained for 100 nights
- Not intended for population estimates

Public Attitudes

General Favorability - Gallup

“One way the Census Bureau could save money is by asking Census interviewers to use their own devices instead of government devices when they do interviews in people's homes. Would you be strongly in favor of the Census workers using their own devices for collecting data, somewhat in favor of it, neither in favor nor against it, somewhat against it, or strongly against it?”

Favor or Oppose BYOD



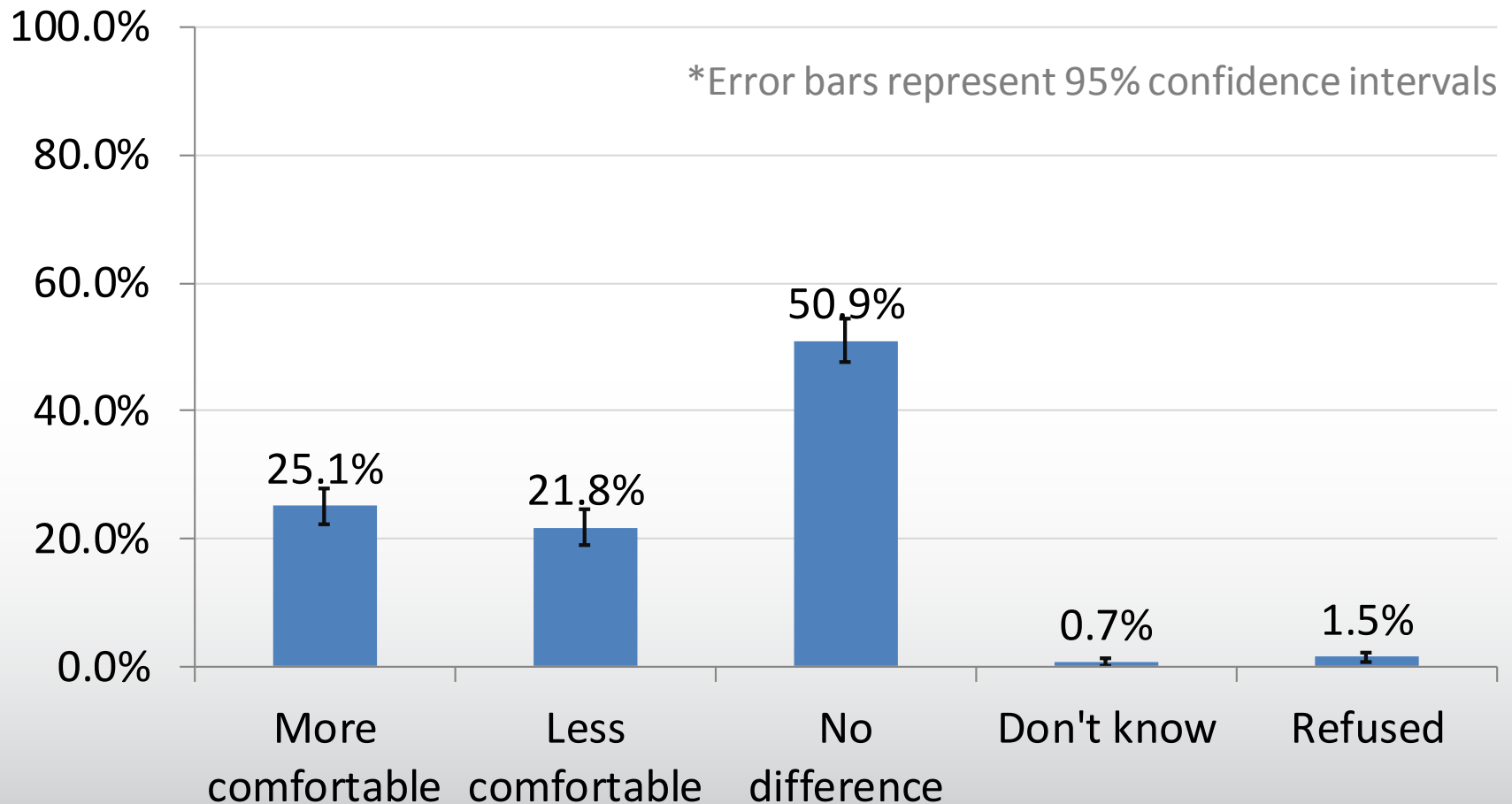
Developing Gallup Questions

- Focus group data used to develop Gallup BYOD questions
- Participants suggested ways to increase comfort with BYOD
 - Respondent could handle the device and enter their own data
 - Data entered could be immediately submitted or transferred and not stored on personal phones
 - “If they have a tablet and bring up a page and tell us to fill out information and to sync it or share it, then we see it close, then we know that this information has gone directly there.”

Immediate Data Transfer

“Some people are concerned about their data being stored on personally-owned smartphones or tablets. If you knew that the data was sent directly to the Census Bureau and not stored on the device, would it make you more comfortable with Census workers using personally-owned devices, less comfortable, or would it not make a difference?”

Immediate Data Transfer



Public Attitudes- Focus Groups

- Inaccurate recall
 - Participants remembered tablets, smartphones, laptops, and special Census devices
 - “It was a little black machine... It seemed like it was specifically designed for a Census person.”
 - “Sort of like UPS with their little device.”

Public Attitudes – Focus Groups

- Distinguishing government issue from BYOD
 - “I assumed it was official.”
 - “I don’t remember asking but I was hoping that it was something the Bureau had given them for that because otherwise they have my information on their phone.”
 - “I guess if they had an identification I would probably just assume it was okay, like I did, whatever device they were using. It didn’t even occur to me until you brought it up.”
 - “No way to tell the difference.”

Attitudinal and Demographic Predictors

Predictors of BYOD Attitudes

- Attitudinal predictors:
 - Belief that statistical agencies keep data confidential predicts favorability toward BYOD
 - General trust in federal statistical system does not predict
- Demographic predictors:
 - Males more likely to favor than females
 - Younger respondents more likely to favor (especially compared to 45-64 age group)

BYOD Concerns

Concerns – Focus Groups

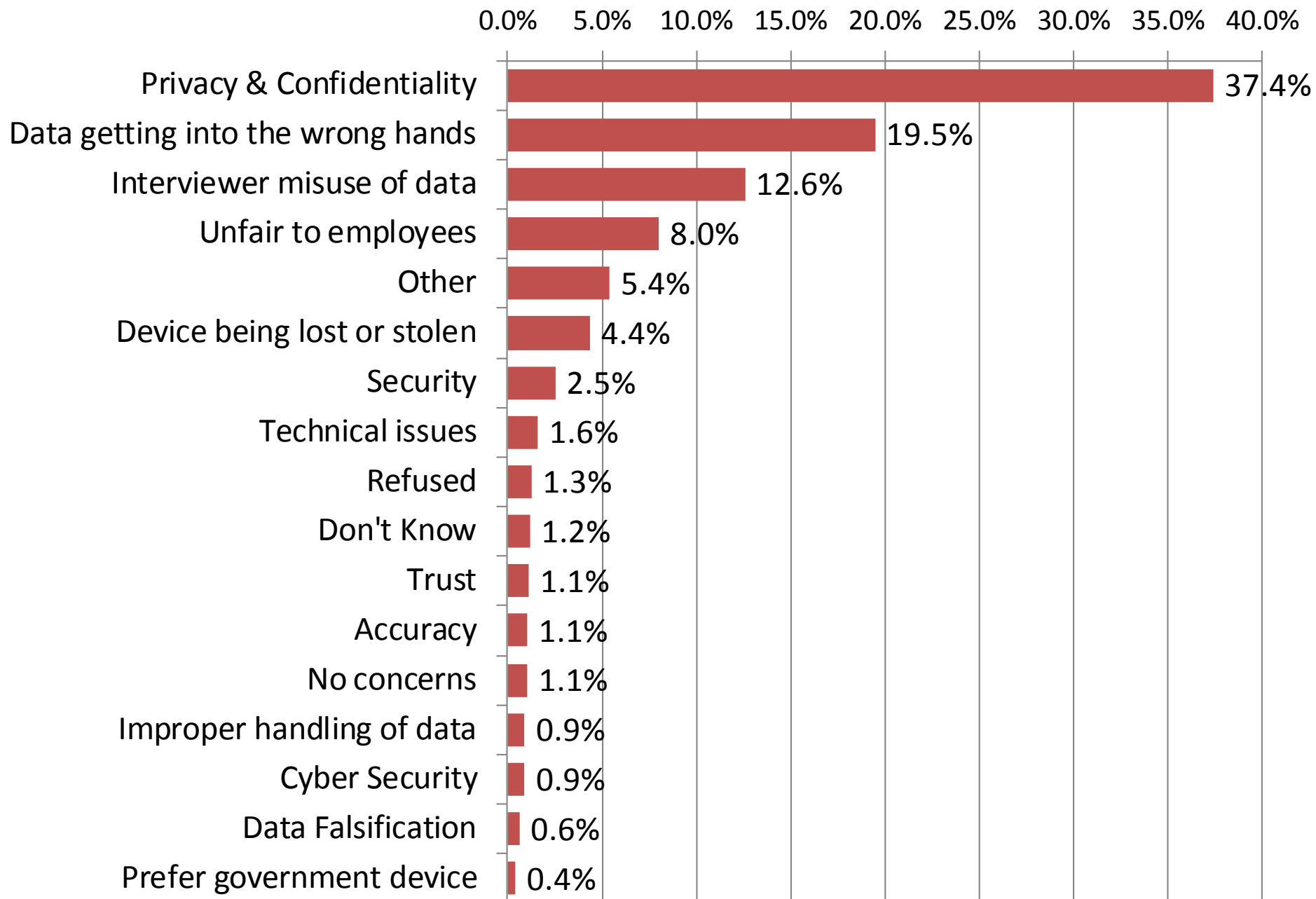
- Privacy and Confidentiality
 - “I was hoping that it was something the Bureau had given them because otherwise they have my information on their phone.”
 - “It’s uncomfortable because its their own device. It’s theirs so they have access to it so others would too.”
- Security of Data
 - “There’s too much risk. People have unlocked phones and they’re open to viruses.”
 - Lost/stolen phones, saved passwords

Concerns – Focus Groups

- Mistrust of employees
 - “The person could steal my data and send it to anybody!”
 - Continued access to information by enumerators
- Exploitation of employees
 - “Are they going to tell people they can’t have this job if they don’t have a smart phone?”

Gallup - Asking about Concerns

“What are you most concerned about when it comes to Census workers using their own smartphone or tablet for data collection?”



Conclusions

Conclusions

1. Public opinion about BYOD is mixed, with many opposing it as data collection method
2. Attitudinal and demographic factors predict favoring BYOD
 - Belief that statistical agencies keep data confidential
 - Sex (males) and age (young adults)
3. Messaging about BYOD should focus on minimizing areas of primary concern:
 - Privacy/security issues
 - Trustworthiness of enumerators
 - Potential unfairness to employees

Questions or comments?

Contact me at:

casey.m.eggleston@census.gov